

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An imaging apparatus comprising:  
an imaging unit that converts an optical image into electronic image data;  
a monitor that displays an image based on electronic image data;  
a storage medium storing electronic image data corresponding to a plurality of sample images; and  
a control circuit that controls operation of said imaging apparatus so as to simultaneously display on said monitor an object image corresponding to the optical image of said imaging unit and one of the plurality of sample images.
2. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said control circuit saves the electronic image data corresponding to the object image in said storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image simultaneously displayed therewith on said monitor.
3. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a second storage medium that stores electronic image data, wherein said control circuit optionally saves the electronic image data corresponding to the object image

in the second storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image simultaneously displayed therewith on said monitor.

4. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said storage medium stores additional data associated with each of the plurality of sample images, the additional data including respective imaging conditions suitable for capturing the plurality of sample images.

5. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said control circuit controls an image capture operation of said imaging unit in accordance with the imaging condition included in the additional data associated with the sample image simultaneously displayed therewith on said monitor.

6. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a reader that reads electronic image data corresponding to a sample image from an external storage medium; and  
a selector that selects whether said control circuit controls operation of said imaging apparatus so as to display on said monitor the sample image read from the external storage medium or one of the plurality of sample images from the storage medium.

7. An imaging apparatus comprising:
  - an imaging unit that converts an optical image into electronic image data;
  - a monitor that displays an image based on electronic image data;
  - a reader that reads electronic image data corresponding to a sample image from an external storage medium; and
  - a control circuit that controls operation of said imaging apparatus so as to simultaneously display on said monitor the sample image and an object image corresponding to the optical image of said imaging unit.
8. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said reader is capable of writing data to the external storage medium, and wherein said controller controls said reader so as to save electronic image data corresponding to the object image on the external storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image displayed simultaneously therewith on said monitor.
9. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising a second storage medium that stores electronic image data, wherein said control circuit optionally saves electronic image data corresponding to the object image on

the second storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image simultaneously displayed therewith on said monitor.

10. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said reader reads additional data associated with the sample image, the additional data including an imaging condition suitable for capturing the sample image.

11. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein said control circuit controls an image capture operation of said imaging unit in accordance with the imaging condition included in the additional data.

12. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said reader reads electronic image data corresponding to a plurality of sample images from the external storage medium, and further reads additional data associated with the plurality of sample images, the additional data including respective imaging conditions suitable for capturing the plurality of sample images.

13. An imaging apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein said control circuit controls operation of said imaging apparatus so as to simultaneously display on said

monitor the object image and one of the plurality of sample images, and controls an image capture operation of said imaging unit in accordance with the image condition included in the additional data associated with the sample image simultaneously displayed on said monitor.

14. A method of controlling an imaging apparatus, the method comprising:

converting an optical image captured by an imaging unit into electronic image data;

displaying on a monitor an image corresponding to electronic image data;

reading from a storage medium electronic image data corresponding to a sample image; and

controlling said displaying step so as to simultaneously display on the monitor an object image corresponding to the optical image captured in said converting step and the sample image read from the storage medium in said reading step.

15. A method of controlling an imaging apparatus according to Claim 14, further comprising a step of storing the object image in the storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image.

16. A method of controlling an imaging apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said reading step further includes reading additional data from the storage medium, the additional data including an imaging condition associated with the sample image read from the storage medium, and said control step further comprises controlling an image capture operation of the imaging unit based on the additional data.

17. A method of controlling an imaging apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said reading step comprises reading a sample image from among a plurality of sample images stored in the storage medium.

18. A method of controlling an imaging apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said reading step comprises reading a sample image from among a plurality of sample images stored in a plurality of storage media.

19. A recording medium having recorded thereon computer-readable program code for controlling an imaging apparatus, the program code comprising:

first computer-readable program code for converting an optical image captured by an imaging unit into electronic image data;

second computer-readable program code for displaying on a monitor an image corresponding to electronic image data;

third computer-readable program code for reading from a storage medium electronic image data corresponding to a sample image; and

fourth computer-readable program code for controlling the imaging apparatus to simultaneously display on the monitor an object image corresponding to the optical image captured by the imaging unit and the sample image read from the storage medium.

20. A recording medium according to Claim 19, the program code further comprising fifth computer-readable program code for saving the image data corresponding to the object image on the storage medium such that the object image is associated with the sample image.

21. A recording medium according to Claim 19, the program code further comprising sixth computer-readable program code for reading from the recording medium additional data associated with the sample image, the additional data including an imaging condition associated with the sample image read from the storage medium.

22. A recording medium according to Claim 19, wherein

the third computer-readable program code allows a sample image stored in a storage medium selected from a plurality of storage media to be read first.